



## **Environmental Services Division**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **GOVERNOR CULVER, DIRECTOR LEOPOLD ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR WATER QUALITY PROJECTS**

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DES MOINES — Governor Chet Culver and DNR Director Richard Leopold announced Thursday that eligible watersheds in Iowa may qualify for federal funds under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Targeted Watersheds Grant Program.

Under this program, \$4.2 million is available to support the protection and restoration of the country's water resources through a holistic watershed approach. This program is designed to encourage successful community-based approaches and techniques to protect water resources throughout the country. Governor Culver can nominate an unlimited number of meritorious projects for funding consideration by EPA. Successful applicants will be eligible for funding of \$100,000 to \$1 million.

Several Iowa projects have received funding under this program in recent years. In 2003, the Rathbun Land and Water Alliance was awarded \$600,000 to support a comprehensive watershed project to protect and improve water quality in Lake Rathbun. In 2004, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Iowa State University were awarded \$1 million to carry out an integrated drainage tile management-wetlands project, in cooperation with three drainage districts in Palo Alto and Pocahontas counties.

Both Culver and Leopold said the grant program offers excellent opportunities for local communities looking to improve water quality.

"Water quality is a statewide issue, but the most successful efforts we see in improving water quality start at the local level," said Culver. "When local citizens care enough about water quality to become active, the work gets done and having access to the federal dollars is a real shot in the arm for transforming interest and ideas into action and results."

Leopold said an increasing number of communities are realizing the importance natural resources and outdoor recreation amenities play in the economic vitality of their regions.

“By investing in water quality, we support wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation and ultimately, our economy. We also make Iowa a great place to live, work and raise a family. Communities that understand these concepts and lead the effort are the ones that will have best positioned themselves for a more prosperous future,” said Leopold.

DNR will solicit applications for the program and provide recommendations to the Governor regarding projects to be submitted for funding consideration. In accordance with EPA guidance, applications will be evaluated upon their ability to apply market-based water quality projects to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment loadings, or pollutant loadings that cause low biological oxygen demand (BOD) in local waters that enter the Mississippi River system contributing to hypoxia in the Northern Gulf of Mexico.

To be considered, applications must be received by the DNR no later than August 22, 2008. Governor Culver will submit Iowa’s nominations to EPA, with final selections being determined by EPA.

Additional details on how to apply for the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program, including eligibility requirements and where to send your application can be found at [www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/grants.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/grants.html). Questions can also be directed to: Steve Hopkins, Nonpoint Program Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources (phone 515-281-6402, email: [stephen.hopkins@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:stephen.hopkins@dnr.iowa.gov)).